

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 EA-12 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00
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R 042254Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
XMT AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY BISSAU
AMEMBASSY GABORONE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING, APRIL 4, 1978

FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL, UNCORRECTED EXCERPT FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING. IF NECESSARY OFFICIAL

VERSION WILL FOLLOW.

Q: HODDING, THE NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS IS QUOTED BY THE WASHINGTON POST THIS MORNING AS SAYING AFTER PRESIDENT CARTER'S DEPARTURE THAT "CUBANS ARE WELCOME" IN AFRIC; AND I WAS WONDERING: HAS ANYONE FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT REPLIED TO THIS AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT OR DO WE FEEL IT SOMEHOW PRESUMPTIOUS TO DISAGREE WITH THE AFRICANS AS TO WHO IS WELCOME IN AFRICA?

A: NO. WE'VE MADE OUR POSITION CLEAR ON THIS, AND EVERY NATION'S REPRESENTATIVES ARE ENTITLED, CLEARLY, TO THE VIEWS THAT THEY EXPRESS.

I THINK THAT WE HAVE DISCUSSED THIS MATTER THOROUGHLY WITH THE NIGERIANS. WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER ON THE MATTER.

Q: WELL, IN OTHER WORDS, THERE'S A DISAGREEMENT.

A: AND INSOFAR AS AMBASSADOR HARRIMAN'S VIEWS ARE CONCERNED, I SIMPLY HAVE TO ACCEPT FOR THE MOMENT -- SINCE I HAVE NO INDEPENDENT REPORT -- THAT HE IN FACT SAID THAT AND SAY I HAVE NO PARTICULAR COMMENT ON THEM.
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WE HAD VERY SATISFACTORY DIRECT TALKS WITH THE NIGERIAN LEADERSHIP ON THESE MATTERS, AND I AM NOT PREPARED TO COMMENT ON HIS PARTICULAR REMARKS.

Q: CAN YOU CLARIFY SOME OF THE DISCREPANCIES THAT EXISTED BETWEEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE WHITE HOUSE VIEWS CONCERNING CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA WHILE YOU WERE WITH THE PRESIDENT'S PARTY? THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD SAID ON FRIDAY THAT IT WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY EVIDENCE OF CUBAN FORCES, MILITARY COMBAT FORCES, HAVING BEEN MOVED INTO ERITREA -- WHILE THE CONTRARY VIEW WAS COMING FROM THE WHITE HOUSE PARTY.

A: NO, I AM SORRY, I AM NOT ABLE TO DEAL WITH IT EXCEPT TO NOTE AS WE HAVE IN THE PAST, THAT THIS SITUATION IS CONSTANTLY FLUID AND THAT THE CHANGE ON THE GROUND AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE INTELLIGENCE ABOUT IT.

Q: WELL, YOU HAVING BEEN WITH THE WHITE HOUSE PARTY, CAN YOU TELL US WHAT THE PREVAILING VIEW IS, IF THERE IS ONE, AS TO THE DEGREE OF U.S. CONCERN OVER THE EXTENT OF CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA --AND IF YOU HAVE ANY CURRENT INFORMATION ON THOSE ACTIVITIES.

A: I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FORMAL TO OFFER YOU ON THE QUESTION OF CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA. I THINK THAT OUR VIEWS GENERALLY-- I WOULD REPEAT THEM --

ON THE QUESTION OF FOREIGN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMBAT IN ETHIOPIA, IS THAT WE OPPOSE SUCH ACTIVITY FOR THE REASONS WE HAVE LISTED BEFORE.

Q: K YOU TELL US THE SECRETARY'S PLANS CONCERNING PARTICIPATION IN ANY OF THESE CONFERENCES IN AFRICA?

A: YES.
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LET ME TRY TO OUTLINE THIS SEQUENCE FOR YOU -- WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THESE EVENTS ARE ALSO MOVING RATHER QUICKLY AND THE EXACT TIME FRAME MAY BE A LITTLE OFF FROM WHAT I AM GOING TO GIVE YOU RIGHT NOW.

FIRST, SOMEWHERE -- IMMEDIATELY, STARTING THIS WEEK, AMBASSADORS GRAHAM AND LOW (OR AMBASSADOR STEPHEN LOW AND JOHN GRAHAM, OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH FOREIGN OFFICE, WILL BE BEGINNING AN INITIAL ROUND OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PRINCIPAL PARTIES IN THE RHODESIAN SITUATION.

THEREAFTER, WHICH IS TO SAY AROUND APRIL 15, THERE IS A MEETING OF SECRETARY VANCE AND DAVID OWEN PLANNED WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERSHIP. IT IS TENTATIVELY PLANNED THAT THIS WOULD BE IN DAR ES SALAAM.

THEREAFTER, OTHER TALKS, CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PRINCIPAL PARTIES AIMING TOWARD AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING ARE POSSIBLE. THAT WOULD SPECIFICALLY INCLUDE, I MIGHT ADD, THE SALISBURY GROUP.

Q: DO YOU THINK THAT VANCE IS GOING?

A: THAT IS A POSSIBILITY.

BUT THIS, I AM GIVING YOU BECAUSE IT IS THE CURRENT STAGE OF PLANNING AND THOUGHT. I DO NOT HAVE SPECIFIC FOLLOW THROUGHS ON IT.

Q: SINCE MUZOREWA ALREADY SAID THAT HE HAS REJECTED THE INVITATION, HOW OPTIMISTIC ARE YOU OF GETTING THEM ALL TOGETHER AT A ROUND TABLE?
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A: WE ARE AWARE THAT THE PRESS REPORTS OF THE SKEPTICISM HAS BEEN OFFERED IN SALISBURY ABOUT OUR EFFORTS. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE WE ARE STILL IN SUCH AN EARLY STAGE OF THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS THAT WE CONTINUE TO HAVE HOPES THAT AS WE PROCEED WITH THAT, ALL THE PARTIES WILL UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR OWN INTERESTS, AND THOSE OF

AN INDEPENDENT, MAJORITY-RULED ZIMBABWE, ARE BEST SERVED BY PARTICIPATION IN A MEETING -- AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING -- WHICH WOULD BE INTENDED TO REACH AN ENDURING SETTLEMENT.

SO I MEAN, THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION IS THAT WE ARE CONTINUING TO TRY TO ENCOURAGE ALL THE PARTIES TO COME TO THAT MEETING -- AND THAT WE WILL HAVE TO SEE THE RESULTS.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE QUESTION OF U.S. POLICY TOWARDS THE ERITREAN CONFLICT?

IN OTHER WORDS, IS IT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S VIEW THAT THE ETHIOPIANS CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IS JUSTIFIED IN ATTEMPTING TO SUBDUCE THE ERITREAN -- THE VARIOUS ERITREAN GROUPS?

A: LET ME TAKE THE QUESTION.

A: HODDING, DOES THIS ADMINISTRATION BELIEVE THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAS A GREATER CLAIM AT THIS POINT TO POWER IN RHODESIA?

A: WE HAVE NEVER SUGGESTED THAT THERE WAS A GREATER OR LESSER DEGREE OF CLAIM. THAT CLAIM CAN ONLY BE ESTABLISHED IN A FAIR, INTERNATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED TRANSITIONAL ELECTION -- AND WE WOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH PRIORITIES AMONG PARTIES.
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Q: WELL ISN'T THERE AN IMPLIED PRIORITY ESTABLISHED IN THE VERY NATURE OF THE MEETINGS THAT YOU ARE SETTING UP?

A: NO, THERE IS NOT -- AND IT IS NOT INTENDED TO DO SO. -- TO ESTABLISH PRIORITIES.

WE DO NOT FAVOR ANY PARTICULAR GROUP IN THIS PROCESS.

WHAT WE FAVOR IS A PROCESS THAT CAN LEAD TO A PEACEFUL TRANSITION.

Q: WAS THERE SOMETHING THAT OCCURRED ON THIS TRIP WHICH INCREASED THE POSSIBILITY, THE PROBABILITY, THAT A SUBSEQUENT SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH THE LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD LEAD SOMEWHERE IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT MUGABE AND NKOMO RECENTLY WERE HERE, RECENTLY CONFERRED WITH SECRETARY VANCE, WITH AMBASSADOR YOUNG, WITH THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY DAVID OWEN IN LONDON?

A: THERE HAVE BEEN MEETINGS AMONG A NUMBER OF THEM, MEETINGS BETWEEN PARTIES TO THIS ENTIRE QUESTION. WE MET, AS YOU KNOW, IN NIGERIA WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF A NUMBER OF FRONT-LINE NATIONS, WHO HAD MET RECENTLY WITH MEMBERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. AND ON THE BASIS OF THE CONVERSATIONS IN WHICH WE HAVE PARTICIPATED, AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES, WE HAVE BEEN OBVIOUSLY ENCOURAGED TO PROCEED WITH AN APPROACH THAT WE FIRST, AND OPENLY ENDORSE, AS I RECALL PUBLICLY IN A PRESIDENTIAL NEWS CONFERENCE, WHICH IS THE ALL PARTIES APPROACH, BUT IN ANY CASE HAVE BEEN UNCLASSIFIED

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PURSUING FOR SOME TIME. WE ARE SIMPLY SPEEDING THAT UP ON THE BASIS OF OUR CONSULTATIONS SINCE THEN.

Q: DOES THAT ENCOURAGE THE POSSIBILITY OF THEIR BEING WILLING TO SIT DOWN WITH THE INTERNAL LEADERS?

A: I WOULD SAY THAT WE HAVE REASON TO HOPE THAT THEY WOULD IN FACT DO SO.

Q: IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN AGREEMENT, THOUGH, WITH THE INTERNAL BLACK LEADERSHIP TO MEET THE SECRETARY, WHY DOES THE SECRETARY CHOOSE TO LEND HIS PERSONAL PRESTIGE AS WELL AS THE PRESTIGE OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SEQUENCE WHICH COULD LEAD ONE TO BELIEVE THAT THE U.S. DOES IN FACT FAVOR ONE GROUP OVER ANOTHER?

A: FIRST, I WOULD SIMPLY REJECT THE NOTION THAT THE SEQUENCE DOES DO SO. WE WISH TO TALK TO ALL THE PARTIES. WE ARE MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO DO SO. AND BEYOND THAT, TO INVOLVE ALL THE PARTIES IN A DISCUSSION WHICH CAN LEAD TO A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION.

Q: DOES THE DAR ES SALAAM MEETING DEPEND ON THESE CONSULTATIONS IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS? IN OTHER WORDS, IF IN THE NEXT TEN DAYS THE INTERNAL GROUP TOLD AMBASSADOR LOW AND MR. GRAHAM THAT THEY DO NOT WANT TO ATTEND AN ALL-PARTY CONFERENCE, WILL MR. VANCE STILL GO AND SEE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT?

A: I DON'T HAVE ANY WAY OF DEALING WITH SUCH IF'S. I JUST CAN'T DEAL WITH IT.

Q: HODDING, IS IT CORRECT TO INFER THAT ATTEMPTS ARE BEING MADE TO SET UP A MEETING BETWEEN VANCE AND THE LEADERS INSIDE RHODESIA?

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A: IT WOULD BE CORRECT TO SAY THAT WE ARE SEEKING MEETINGS AT A NUMBER OF LEVELS WITH ALL THE PARTIES, INCLUDING THE LEADERS INSIDE RHODESIA. I CANNOT GO INTO AT WHAT LEVEL OR WITH WHOM RIGHT NOW. WE ARE SIMPLY MAKING THE EFFORT, AND I HOPE I WILL HAVE MORE TO GIVE YOU AS TIME DEVELOPS ON THIS.

Q: HODDING, DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT SOVIET AND EAST GERMAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA? COMBAT?

A: NO.

Q: WHAT ABOUT REPORTS OF A NEW BUILD-UP IN MOZAMBIQUE?

A: NO, I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT. VANCE

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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